



Congressman Boucher is joined by Charlie Clark, member of the Smyth County Board of Supervisors, and Travis Jackson of the USDA's Rural Development Agency as they turn on the water for the federally funded Long Hollow water project in the Rich Valley portion of Smyth County.

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Long Hollow Water Project Service Commencement

April 7, 2010

Saltville, Virginia

I am pleased to return to return to the Rich Valley community today to mark the completion of a federally funded water project, which is bringing safe and reliable public drinking water for the first time to more than 40 homes and businesses in Smyth County.

Safe and reliable public water systems are essential to maintaining the high quality of life in Southwest Virginia as well as to achieving our economic development goals for the region. For these reasons, working with our region's leaders to expand our water and wastewater infrastructure is one of my highest priorities.

As part of that effort, I have worked with Smyth County officials for a number of years to secure federal funding to construct a new water system to serve the residents of the Long Hollow portion of the Rich Valley community. Previously, many homes and businesses in this area relied on private wells, which had poor water quality.

To address this problem, at my urging, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, through its Rural Development Agency provided federal funding totaling more than \$1 million to the Smyth County Board of Supervisors for the construction of a new water system to serve more than 40 homes in Rich Valley. The funding included a federal grant of \$590,000 and a low-interested federal loan \$500,000.

With the benefit of the federal funds, more than 20,000 feet of water lines have been installed along Beaver Creek Road, Valley Road, Hunter's Lane, Cross Link Road and Doane Hollow Road. In addition, 44 water meters and six fire hydrants have been established throughout the community. A 100,000 gallon water storage tank and one booster pump station have been constructed to complete the project.

The new water system has been under construction for eight months, and today, as a result of its completion, more residents in the Rich Valley community will have access to safe and reliable water service. The new water system in Rich Valley represents another significant step in our ongoing work to improve and expand access to public water service throughout Southwest Virginia.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize a number of individuals who have been instrumental in advancing this project.

I would like to thank Travis Jackson, Area Director for the Rural Development Agency, and his excellent staff for their outstanding work to secure the USDA funds for this project.

I also want to thank Charlie Clark, who represents this area on the Smyth County Board of Supervisors, for both the use of his property for today's celebration and for his longstanding efforts on behalf of this community. The other members of the Smyth County Board of Supervisors deserve our appreciation today as well.

Michael Carter, Acting County Administrator for Smyth County, and Scott Simpson, Smyth County Engineer, also deserve our thanks today for their excellent efforts to see this project through to completion.

Finally, I would like to thank Derek Lyall, my Project Manager, for his continued work in support of water projects throughout the Ninth Congressional District.

The new water system in the Long Hollow portion of Rich Valley represents a significant step forward in our ongoing efforts to expand our region's water and wastewater infrastructure. I would like to thank everyone here for the cooperation and successful work toward the completion of the new water system and offer special congratulations to the residents who are now receiving safe and reliable public water service.